Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences

Employee Newsletter

June 20, 2008

Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from the Director
- 2 2007 ASAFS Awards
- **3** 2007 Laboratory of the Year
- 4 Forensic Discipline Profile
- 6 News from State Personnel
- **6** WeSave is Here
- 7 HR Corner
- 8 Fourth of July Recipe

Message from the Director

Greetings! I am excited about our newsletter. This is another example of our Department moving forward. I have always supported the concept of one laboratory in 11 locations for ADFS and this type of communication is imperative to that concept. Kudos to Holli Baker for taking on this project, especially during audit preparations!

ASCLD-LAB is upon us and I am eagerly anticipating our re-accreditation. Thanks to everyone for the hard work performed in preparation for this important audit.

ASAFS is still fresh on my mind. Lillie and her fellow "pirates" obviously spent a lot of time in preparation and are to be congratulated on a job well done! I thought our educational opportunities were well prepared and received. Thanks to Dale, Jack, Jimmy and Faron for their contributions.

I am in the preliminary phases of negotiation with Auburn University concerning the new Headquarters and Auburn Laboratory site. Preparations are underway concerning inclusion on the Auburn Board of Trustees calendar June 26-27, 2008 for consideration of our new buildings. As the Auburn project progresses, I will continue negotiations with South Alabama concerning available space for our Mobile project. The Huntsville project is moving forward with the architect involved. Fund acquisition is a priority in the next year for Florence, Tuscaloosa and Hoover phase II building projects.

The 2008 Legislative Session was a mixed bag again this year. We were able to negotiate an ADFS acceptable bill concerning DUI ignition interlock devices, but our DNA fee increase bill got stuck on the regular House calendar. The bill came out of committee, as it did in 2007, but got held up in a situation concerning all new court fee increase bills. I will again move forward on the fee increase bill in 2009. I will also attempt to introduce a post conviction DNA testing bill with respect to those already convicted of a capital offense.

The latest news concerning the 2009 General Fund budget is that cuts will now be across the board, equally divided among every agency. Originally some agencies would have had deeper cuts, while others would be level funded. When the final 09 budget is announced, I will inform you of how it will affect the Department.

The Department has 220 employees (the most in our history). I contemplate 4-5 more hires in the next year, when and if funds are available.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of the Department and its Mission. I enjoy working with you everyday as we provide a vital service to our "bosses", the citizens of this great state and country. They deserve nothing less than our best efforts focused in a quest for the truth.



2007 ASAFS Awards

Scientists of the Year

Region I: Glenn Brown
Region II: Dancy Sullivan
Region III: Kristen Maturi
Region IV: Mike Benak

Administrators of the Year

Region I: Juliet Smith
Region II: James Carter
Region III: Shay Tolsen
Region IV: Ruth Coleman

Herman D. Jones

Outstanding Scientist Award

Mike Benak Dothan Laboratory

Kate Hudson

Outstanding Administrator Award

James Carter Birmingham Regional Laboratory

Paul E. Shoffeitt Award

Kathy Richert Montgomery Regional Laboratory

C. J. Rehling Meritorious Service Awards

Debbie Dodd Dr. Steve Boudreau Vonda Helton Dr. Kenneth Snell Edward Hatcher Nathan Nguyen Lisa Cary Greg Turner Mark Pevey Sam Mitchell

ADFS Laboratory of the Year Award

Auburn Laboratory and Training Center

Director's Award of Excellence

Mobile Drug Chemistry Section Mobile Forensic Biology Section DNA Databank Section Implied Consent Section



TO ALL OF OUR WINNERS FOR A JOB WELL DONE

2007 Laboratory of the Year



AUBURN LABORATORY

Front Row: Casey DuBose, Alice Hanvey, Pam Kitchens Back Row: Sherwin Boswell, Melissa Armstrong, Robert Agee



AUBURN TRAINING CENTER

Jessica Gissendanner, Karen Collins, Kari Bowen, Stephanie Carter



Forensic Discipline Profile—CODIS

Submitted by Greg Risch and Sue Rogers Birmingham Regional Laboratory

On May 6, 1994, the Alabama DNA Database Act became effective and charged the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences with the authority to collect DNA from anyone: (i) convicted of a felony crime, (ii) in prison for a felony crime, (iii) on probation for a felony crime, (iv) convicted of certain misdemeanor crimes, or (v) applying for a pardon or restoration of civil rights. The Act also authorized ADFS to analyze, type and record genetic markers from those DNA samples and to create a statewide DNA database system for the collection, storage and maintenance of genetic identification information as it pertains to the identification or exclusion of criminal suspects. In 1999, juveniles convicted of criminal sex offenses and adults fulfilling the Community Notification Act were added to the list of persons who must provide a DNA sample.

The DNA Databank receives collected DNA samples in two forms: blood and buccal. For blood samples, the Alabama Department of Corrections collects whole blood samples from inmates while they are undergoing health screening. Once received by the DNA Databank, a portion of the liquid blood sample is transferred to a treated filter paper card, allowed to dry overnight, and packaged for storage. For buccals, the Alabama Board of Pardon and Parole and other law enforcement agencies use a foam swab to collect buccal cells from the inside of the mouth of convicted offenders. A portion of the buccal cells is transferred to a treated filter paper card and then packaged for transport to the DNA Databank.

By mid 2002, the Alabama DNA Databank had collected over 100,000 biological samples from convicted offenders across Alabama and was receiving an average of 1500 samples per month. Approximately 40,000 samples had been analyzed for eight (8) genetic markers and were being compared to unsolved cases within Alabama. Many fewer, approximately 15,000 samples, had DNA profiles consisting of the standard thirteen (13) genetic markers required for submission to the National DNA Index System (NDIS) for comparison to unsolved cases nationwide. In order to eliminate the existing backlog, as well as prevent its continuing accumulation, a plan of attack was needed.

The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences formulated a plan which utilized federal assistance through the Forensic Resource Network, federal grant awards from NIJ's Convicted Offender DNA Backlog Reduction Program (both outsource and in-house), as well as the dedicated and determined staff of the Alabama DNA Databank. Through this combined effort, new staff was hired and trained, high throughput instrumentation and amplification chemistry were validated and implemented, and over 70,000 samples were outsourced to two other laboratories.

By April 30, 2007, the Alabama DNA Databank had fully eliminated its backlog of convicted offender samples. During this four year time period, the number of DNA profiles from Alabama convicted offenders being compared to unsolved cases at the national level increased by over 150,000. As a result of this backlog reduction effort, over 100 Alabama offenders were linked to unsolved cases in other states. More than 700 Alabama offenders were associated with unsolved cases within the state of Alabama, providing assistance in 785 investigations. To date, Alabama offenders have matched to unsolved crimes in 36 out of 50 states and have aided in the criminal investigations of over 1,700 unsolved crimes.



CODIS

Front Row: Alison Ethridge, Sharon Johnson, Phoenix Perez Back Row: Sue Rogers, Greg Risch, Sarah Hungerford

NDIS Composition as of October 2007

5,070,473Convicted Offender Profiles

194,785

Forensic Profiles

Across the country, states have begun to shift the focus from collection of DNA samples upon conviction to collection of DNA samples upon arrest. There are currently thirteen (13) states that have passed legislation to collect DNA samples upon felony arrest. For the past two years, bills have been introduced to the Alabama Legislature for the collection of a DNA sample upon felony arrest. The Alabama DNA Databank currently receives approximately 18,000 samples per year from offenders convicted of felony and specified misdemeanor crimes. Collection of DNA samples upon felony arrest in Alabama is expected to increase the number of biological samples received by the DNA Databank to over 100,000 per year.

Interesting Cases
Recognition for a Job Well Done
Forensic Sciences in the News

Send your thoughts, ideas and suggestions for future newsletters to Holli Baker at holli.baker@adfs.alabama.gov

Special thanks to all who submitted articles!!



News from State Personnel

From the 2008 Legislative Session:

The good news is that all state employees will be receiving a 3.5% cost-of-living raise on October 1, 2008, our health insurance increase is fully funded, and the Governor and Finance Director are prohibited from executing arbitrary across the board merit raise freezes.

Excerpt from: "2008 Legislative Session is a Success for State Employees"; http://www.asea.org/; accessed 0.5/23/2008.

More information is available at the <u>Alabama State Employees Association</u> webpage.



2008 Legislative Session
3.5% cost-of-living raise
effective October 1





WeSave is Here

Many other states have taken advantage of the fabulous discounts offered through WeSave. Now Alabama can begin taking advantage of the savings!!

WeSave is contracted by state governments to offer the program as a no-cost (FREE) reward and incentive community designed for this exclusive workforce and buying group.

WeSave aligns local retail merchants and national brands in each participating state to offer discounts, special promotions, and services to benefit and attract the valued and robust business of public employees.

Activating your WeSave card brings daily access to consistent savings, services, and life enhancing content directly to you.

Activation of your membership card is easy—go to <u>WeSave.com</u> and select the big blue hand!

To find participating merchants in your state, visit the Merchants section of the WeSave Web site. Search for merchants alphabetically, by business category, by zip code or region. Traveling? Find WeSave merchants in other states by clicking Change State at the bottom of any page.

Get the most out of your WeSave membership by checking the <u>WeSave.com</u> site frequently. We're constantly adding new merchants and finding new ways to help you save money.

Have you activated your FREE <u>WeSave webmail</u> account? E-mail is accessible from any web browser and is an absolutely free benefit for WeSave members.

HR Corner



Weight Watchers at Work

Summer is here!! It's time to get out those bathing suits for some fun in the sun.

The Weight Watchers at Work Program is available to all eligible state employees at a discount rate. If you are insured with State Employees' Insurance Board you are eligible for 15 weeks of Weight Watchers for half price.

More information is available at the Alabama Department of Public Health's <u>Weight Watchers at Work</u> website.

Birthdays

July

Mae Holley Patricia Blood **Melody Denton Ed Moran** Rebecca Booker **Phillip Rhegness Pam Kitchens** Shane Golden Mike Benak Margaret Hopf **Shari Kelley Bridgett Huntley** Tammi Sligh **Antoinette White** Julie Ehlers Nancy Schofield

Faron Brewer Ed White Sherry Steele Melissa Clinard Jimmy Carter Mike Weaver

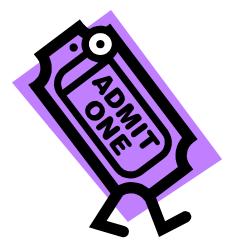
August

Melissa Armstrong Lori Seman Ernest Cody Stephanie Fisher Karen Noblitt Robert Agee Debbie Dodd Shawanda Sims Alison Ethridge
Stephen Boudreau
Selwyn Jones
Vonda Helton
Laura Fulks
April Leon
Raena Motes-Garmon
Rod Kennette
Olivette Fluker
Yvette Drakeford
Brenda Jay
Kelly Crawford

September

Lee Anderson Phyllis Rollan Marcia Jaillet
Steven Ballenger
Gerald Howard
Donna Gibbons
Alfredo Paredes
Tommy Bramblett
Edward Hatcher
James Foster
Mike Hitchcock
Sue Rogers





Rave Movie Tickets

Discounted Rave Movie tickets can be purchased for \$6.50 by ASEA members. To purchase these discounted tickets, go to the ASEA Central Office or call 1-800-252-7063.

Tickets may also be purchased on-line at <u>ASEA Member Benefits - Buy</u> <u>Tickets Online</u>

July 4th - Independence Day

"Taxation without representation!" That was the battle cry of the 13 colonies in America that were forced to pay taxes to England's King George III with no representation in Parliament. As dissatisfaction grew, British troops were sent in to quell any signs of rebellion, and repeated attempts by the colonists to resolve the crisis without war proved fruitless.

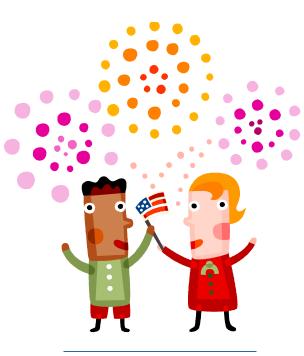
On June 11, 1776, the colonies' Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia formed a committee with the express purpose of drafting a document that would formally sever their ties with Great Britain. The committee included Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and Robert R. Livingston. The document was crafted by Jefferson, who was considered the strongest and most eloquent writer. (Nevertheless, a total of 86 changes were made to his draft.) The final version was officially adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4.

The following day, copies of the Declaration of Independence were distributed and, on July 6, The Pennsylvania Evening Post became the first newspaper to print the extraordinary document.

The Declaration of Independence has since become our nation's most cherished symbol of liberty.

Congress established Independence Day as a holiday in 1870, and in 1938 Congress reaffirmed it as a holiday, but with full pay for federal employees. Today, communities across the nation mark this major midsummer holiday with parades, fireworks, picnics and the playing of the "Star Spangled Banner" and marches by John Philip Sousa.

Excerpt from: "A Capitol Fourth"; http://www.pbs.org/capitolfourth/history.html; accessed 06/18/2008.



Have a Safe and Happy Fourth of July Holiday

Fourth of July Recipe sure to set off Fireworks!!

Macaroni Salad--Kicking it up a notch!

Submitted by Michelle Cuenco of the Montgomery Regional Laboratory (Special Thanks to Michelle's Mom, Juanita Garcia, for sharing her wonderful recipe)

1 lb macaroni, cooked

1/2 cup each of onion, bell pepper, celery, diced small

1 med. cucumber peeled and diced, small cubes

4 Roma tomatoes cut into small cubes

1 pkg. ranch dressing, the dry kind

1 lb small shrimp, cooked (salad shrimp) salt, pepper, parsley flakes to taste 3/4 cup of mayo juice of 1/2 lemon

Mix the mayo, lemon juice and ranch dressing together, add the other items and mix well. (If allowed to marinate over night in the refrigerator, it is better.)

This is a great alternative to the traditional potato salad at cook outs or as a side dish for just about anything. It is cool and refreshing, and when I first made it years ago I received rave reviews from all those present at the party. This recipe makes a lot but you can also cut it in half. If you like, add more mayo and shrimp. I just decided to kick up regular Macaroni Salad. Just as tasty without shrimp or your favorite grilled meat substitutes well.